

I claim:

1. A system for driving a caisson into the ground, comprising:  
a plurality of vibratory devices, where each vibratory device  
generates a vibratory force;  
5 a clamp assembly for rigidly securing each of the vibratory devices  
to one of a plurality of predetermined angularly spaced  
locations about the caisson; and  
a timing system operatively connecting the plurality of vibratory  
10 devices to synchronize the vibratory forces generated  
thereby.
2. A system as recited in claim 1, in which:  
one of the vibratory devices is a master vibratory device;  
15 another vibratory device is a slave vibratory device; and  
the timing system causes the slave vibratory device to generate  
vibratory forces based on the operation of the master  
vibratory device.
- 20 3. A system as recited in claim 1, in which the timing system  
comprises:  
at least one gear box; and  
a plurality of shafts; where  
each shaft extends between one of the vibratory devices and the at  
25 least one gear box; and  
operation of one of the vibratory devices causes operation of  
another of the vibratory devices through the at least one gear  
box and the plurality of shafts such that the vibratory forces  
generated by the vibratory devices are synchronized.
- 30 4. A system as recited in claim 1, further comprising:  
a crane assembly; and

a suspension assembly connected between the crane assembly and the vibratory devices for inhibiting transmission of vibratory forces to the crane assembly.

5        5. A system as recited in claim 1, in which:  
one of the vibratory devices is a master vibratory device;  
the other vibratory devices are slave vibratory devices; and  
the timing system causes the slave vibratory devices to generate  
vibratory forces based on the operation of the master  
vibratory device.  
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6.        A system as recited in claim 5, in which the timing system comprises:  
a plurality of gear boxes; and  
15        a plurality of shafts; where  
a first shaft extends from the master vibratory device to a first gear  
box;  
a second shaft extends from the first gear box to a first slave  
vibratory device;  
20        a third shaft extends from the first slave vibratory device to a  
second gear box; and  
a fourth shaft extends from the second gear box to a second slave  
vibratory device; wherein  
operation of the master vibratory device causes operation of the  
25        first and second slave vibratory devices through the first and  
second gear boxes and the first, second, third, and fourth  
shafts such that the vibratory forces generated by the first  
and second slave vibratory devices are synchronized with  
the vibratory forces generated by the master vibratory  
device.  
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7.        A system as recited in claim 5, in which the timing system comprises:  
first, second, and third gear boxes; and

a plurality of shafts; where  
a first shaft extends from the master vibratory device to the first  
5 gear box;  
a second shaft extends from the first gear box to a first slave  
vibratory device;  
a third shaft extends from the first slave vibratory device to the  
10 second gear box;  
a fourth shaft extends from the second gear box to a second slave  
vibratory device;  
a fifth shaft extends from the second slave vibratory device to the  
15 third gear box; and  
a sixth shaft extends from the third gear box to a third slave  
vibratory device; wherein  
operation of the master vibratory device causes operation of the  
20 first, second, and third slave vibratory devices through the  
first, second, and third gear boxes and the first, second,  
third, fourth, fifth, and sixth shafts such that the vibratory  
forces generated by the first, second, and third slave  
vibratory devices are synchronized with the vibratory forces  
generated by the master vibratory device.

8. A system as recited in claim 1, in which the timing system  
interconnects the vibratory devices in a daisy chain configuration to  
synchronize the vibratory forces generated by the vibratory devices.  
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9. A system as recited in claim 1, in which:  
each vibratory device comprises at least two eccentric weights; and  
the timing system is operatively connected between the vibratory  
30 devices such that the eccentric weights rotate at substantially  
the same speed.

10. A system as recited in claim 9, in which the timing system  
comprises:  
at least one gear box; and

a plurality of shafts; where  
each shaft is operatively connected between one of the eccentric  
weights and the at least one gear box; and  
the shafts are rotated with the eccentric weights such that the  
eccentric weights rotate in synchrony with each other.

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11. A system as recited in claim 5, in which:  
each vibratory device comprises at least two eccentric weights; and  
the timing system comprises

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at least one gear box; and  
a plurality of shafts; wherein  
each shaft is operatively connected between one of the eccentric  
weights and the at least one gear box; and  
the shafts rotate based on rotation of the eccentric weights of the  
15 master vibratory device such that the eccentric weights of the  
slave vibratory devices rotate in synchrony with eccentric  
weights of the master vibratory device.

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12. A method of connecting a crane assembly to a caisson to  
20 drive the caisson into the ground, comprising:

providing a plurality of vibratory devices for generating vibratory  
forces;  
connecting the plurality of vibratory devices to the crane assembly  
such that transmission of vibratory forces from the vibratory  
25 devices to the crane assembly is inhibited;  
rigidly securing each of the vibratory devices to one of a plurality of  
predetermined angularly spaced locations about the caisson;  
operating each of the plurality of vibratory devices such that the  
vibratory devices each generate a vibratory force;  
30 operatively connecting the plurality of vibratory devices together to  
synchronize the vibratory forces generated thereby.

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13. A method as recited in claim 12, further comprising the steps  
of:

5 identifying one of the vibratory devices as a master vibratory device;  
and

identifying another vibratory device as a slave vibratory device;  
wherein

10 the step of operatively connecting the plurality of vibratory devices  
further comprises the step of operating the slave vibratory  
device to generate vibratory forces based on the operation of  
the master vibratory device.

14. A method as recited in claim 12, in which the step of  
operatively connecting the plurality of vibratory devices further comprises  
15 the step of interconnecting the vibratory devices in a daisy chain  
configuration to synchronize the vibratory forces generated by the  
vibratory devices.

16. A method as recited in claim 12, in which:  
20 the step of providing the plurality of vibratory devices comprises the  
step of providing at least two eccentric weights; and  
the step of operatively connecting the plurality of vibratory devices  
further comprises the step of operatively connecting the  
vibratory devices such that the eccentric weights rotate at  
25 substantially the same speed.

17. A method as recited in claim 15, in which the step of  
operatively connecting the plurality of vibratory devices further comprises  
the steps of:

30 providing at least one gear box;  
providing a plurality of shafts;  
operatively connecting each shaft between one of the eccentric  
weights and the at least one gear box; and  
rotating the shafts with the eccentric weights such that the eccentric

weights rotate in synchrony with each other.

17. A system for driving a large diameter caisson into the ground, comprising:

- 5        a plurality of vibratory devices, where each vibratory device comprises:
  - a housing; and
  - eccentric weights mounted within the housing, where rotating the eccentric weights in opposite directions generate vibratory forces;
- 10      a clamp assembly for rigidly securing each of the vibratory devices to one of a plurality of predetermined angularly spaced locations about the caisson;
- 15      a suspension assembly connected to the vibratory devices for inhibiting transmission of vibratory forces; and
- 20      a timing system comprising
  - at least one gear box, and
  - a plurality of shafts; whereeach shaft extends between the eccentric weights of one of the vibratory devices and the at least one gear box; and
- 25      rotation of the eccentric weights of one of the vibratory devices is transmitted to rotation of the eccentric weights of another of the vibratory devices through the at least one gear box and the plurality of shafts such that the vibratory forces generated by the vibratory devices are synchronized.

18. A system as recited in claim 17, in which:

- one of the vibratory devices is a master vibratory device;
- another vibratory device is a slave vibratory device; and
- 30      the timing system causes the slave vibratory device to generate vibratory forces based on the operation of the master vibratory device.

19. A system as recited in claim 18, in which the timing system interconnects the vibratory devices in a daisy chain configuration to synchronize the vibratory forces generated by the vibratory devices.